

REMARKS

The dependency of claim 19 has been changed to resolve the antecedent issue. Claims 8 and 18 have been put into independent form to secure the allowance of claims 8, 9, 18-20.

Claim 1 is rejected as being anticipated by Brammer USP 5,439,061. This rejection is respectfully traversed. The Examiner ascribes features to Brammer that it simply doesn't possess. Brammer runs in the string 25 in Figure 1 with a running tool 63. That assembly is used to secure the lower end of string 25 to a mudline hanger at the subsea wellhead. There is no seal 83 that is run in at this time and therefore Figure 1 doesn't show it. When the string 25 is supported at the lower end a setting tool 77 is used to deliver the seal 83 into position and release it in a separate trip as shown in Figures 2 and 4. After the seal 83 is released the tensioning force is applied and locked in with ratchet lock 39 before the tool 77 is released.

Claim 1 states that the tubular string and seal assembly are run in together. Brammer doesn't do this and it is for this reason that he requires a second trip to deliver the seal and apply a tension force after setting the seal on the second trip. This reference does not anticipate claim 1 and it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and the rest of the claims that depend from it are in condition for allowance. It is presumed that application of Brammer to claim 19 was an error as that claim is indicated to include allowable subject matter.

As to claim 7, the Brammer patent features the inner part of the hanger moving and resting over a wide vertical range. This results the requirement for a special oversized height wellhead to accommodate this large vertical movement whereas the invention of claim 7 using the ratchet accommodates all possibilities of vertical positioning between the inner and outer hanger members below the land off point in the wellhead. This results in the ability to use a standard shorter wellhead.

Respectfully submitted,




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